

Eolis exigua.

Body slender, yellowish white with olive or pale brown markings. Dorsal tentacles linear, moderately long, with a ring of brown near the top: oral tentacles about one-third shorter and of the same colour. Branchiæ generally in a single series of five or six on each side, but in fine full-grown specimens there are two on each side in front or sometimes a cluster of three, the third being placed a little behind the others. There is also frequently an additional papilla united with some of the others behind. They are ovate, tapering abruptly to a point: there is a ring of olive or yellowish brown, sometimes reddish, at a short distance from the apex, and frequently two others, less perfect below, but generally these are only indicated by brown spots or streaks. The body is also blotched and spotted with brown, and there is frequently an interrupted line of that colour on each side. Foot rounded in front and nearly linear, with a slight margin of pale brown at the sides. Length $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 lines.

This species was found in considerable abundance in Fowey Harbour on *Laminaria saccharina*. Mr. Cocks has also found it at Falmouth. It is allied to *Eolis despecta*, some specimens of which were found in company with it, but it is easily distinguished by not having the waved dorsal line of the latter species. It appears to be the *Tergipes lacinulatus* of Professor Lovèn, but we cannot concur in referring it to the *Limax tergipes* of Forskahl (*Doris lacinulatus*, Gmelin).

XXI.—*Note on the Occurrence of the Bonapartian Gull (Larus Bonapartii, Rich. and Swains.) for the first time in Europe.*

By WM. THOMPSON, Esq., Pres. Nat. Hist. and Phil. Society of Belfast.

A SPECIMEN of this beautiful little species of Gull (first distinctly characterized in the 'Fauna Boreali Americana' of Richardson and Swainson in 1831), was killed at the tidal portion of the river Lagan, between Ormeau Bridge and the Botanic Garden, about a mile above the lowest bridge at the town of Belfast, on the 1st of February 1848. It was flying singly. The person who shot the bird, attracted by its pretty appearance merely, left it to be preserved with a taxidermist, who on receipt of any birds, either rare or unknown to him, kindly brings them for my inspection. I had thus most fortunately an opportunity of examining the bird previous to its being skinned, when all the following measurements, &c. were made. This was not however until the morning of the 5th of February, when the irides had faded so that the colour could not be accurately noted.

The species is mentioned in the work referred to (p. 425) as "common in all parts of the fur countries, where it associates with the Terns, and is distinguished by its peculiar shrill and plaintive cry." Mr. Audubon (*Orn. Biog.* vol. iv. p. 212, 1838) informs us, that he first met with the species in August when crossing the Ohio at Cincinnati, and subsequently shot a specimen in November on the Mississippi, a few miles below the mouth of the Arkansas. In Chesapeake Bay after the first of April, and at the harbour of Passamoudy (Maine) in May, he saw them in great abundance:—at the latter place his son killed seventeen at one discharge of his double-barreled gun. It is added that "none of them were observed on any part of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, or on the coast of Labrador or Newfoundland, and that in winter this species is common in the harbour of Charleston, but none are seen at that season near the mouths of the Mississippi." This author subsequently "found in London a pair of these birds * * * which had been brought from Greenland."

The dimensions of my specimen are:—

	in.	lin.
Length, total	13	9*
Length of bill from forehead	1	1
———— bill to rictus	1	9
———— wing from carpal joint to end primaries	10	4
———— tarsus	1	4½
———— middle toe	1	2½
———— middle toe nail	0	2½
———— of outer toe	1	1½
———— outer toe nail	0	2
———— inner toe.....	0	11
———— inner toe nail	0	2
———— hind toe	0	2
———— hind toe nail	0	1
Tibia bare of feathers from tarsal joint	0	6
Wings, pass the tail.....	1	9†

Bill in form as described by Richardson, excepting that at the base its depth exceeds its breadth. At the base of the upper

* As measured by applying a piece of twine so as to touch each portion of the bird in a straight line from the point of the bill to the end of the tail. The bird being laid on a flat surface, the space which it occupied from the point of the bill to the end of the tail was 12 inches 6 lines. The length of three specimens given in the 'Faun. Bor. Amer.' was from 15 in. to 15 in. 6 lines. Looking to that work after my measurement was made, and too late for correction (the bird being skinned), I found that the neck is stretched when the length is taken, whereas in this and every similar case, I have been particular that it should never be in the least stretched, but placed as it were in repose. Audubon describes the adult male as 14½ inches and the "young in December as 13¾ inches."

† The figure of the adult bird in the 'Faun. Bor. Amer.' does not sufficiently exhibit the length of wings:—they are described in that work as passing the tail two inches.

mandible where the plumage ends, it is $2\frac{1}{2}$ lines in breadth, whereas the depth at the same place is $3\frac{1}{2}$ lines. In colour it is black; paler at the base beneath. Tarsi, toes and webs of feet of a uniform pale flesh colour as the "legs" of the young male are described to be in the 'Faun. Bor. Amer.' These are described as "carmine-red" in the adult. In the specimen under examination they are just the colour that I have remarked those of the nestling *Larus ridibundus* to be, and which it retains through the following autumn and winter; the adult of this species having these parts of an arterial blood-red. The claws are blackish and dark brown. Inside of the mouth pale reddish flesh-colour:—described to be carmine in the adult. The tail may be termed even at the end, "very slightly rounded laterally." The beautiful long tern-like wings were to me the most striking character at the first glance, and indicated what it was afterwards found had been remarked by Audubon, viz. that—"the flight of this gull is light, elevated and rapid, resembling in buoyancy that of some of our Terns more than that of most of our Gulls, which move their wings more sedately."

Plumage. Head white, excepting the usual blackish seasonal ear-spot of *Xema*; a little of this colour before the lower portion of, and beneath the eye, and a little above it posteriorly—also blackish mixed with white on the nape. Thence to the back very pale pearl gray; back or mantle ("manteau," Temm.) pearl or pale bluish gray. Tail pure white except from about a line inwards from the tip, where a band of black nearly an inch in breadth appears. The wings exhibit generally the bluish gray of maturity, but have "clove brown markings on the bastard wing, lesser coverts and scapulars; anterior border of the wing white from its shoulder for the breadth of four greater primary coverts." *Primaries* exhibiting in degree considerably more black than the specimen described in 'Faun. Bor. Amer.'—outer margin of the first entirely black; of the second, from tip upwards for $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches black, thence white; of the third, from the tip upwards black for 4 inches next the shaft, for $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches on outer margin*. Remainder of the primaries terminated with brownish black except at the extreme tip. On the third, the first indication of white appears in a mere line of that colour, thence it becomes gradually larger in size and deeper in shade to the seventh, where it assumes the pearl gray of the lower portion of the same feather. The black becomes more and more tinged with brown from the

* Dr. Richardson remarks that,—“the extent of black on the ends increases gradually from the first to the fourth, on which it measures above an inch, diminishing again in the following ones.” In my specimen the extent of black increases gradually only to the third, in which it is $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch in depth, and diminishes in the succeeding feathers.

first primary to the last; the light-coloured tip on the contrary becomes gradually of a deeper shade from the third to the last.

Shafts of all the primaries white, except the upper portion of the first, which is dusky. Black appears on the inner web of the three longest primaries, much lessening both in length and breadth from the first to the third; in the first it occupies four inches in length, and its greatest breadth from the shaft is 4 lines ($\frac{1}{3}$ inch).

The secondaries exhibit a large space of blackish brown towards the tip within their pearl gray margins; the tertiaries have more or less of blackish brown irregularly disposed towards their tips.

Under surface of wings entirely white, except that the portions of the primaries, secondaries and tertiaries, which are dark above, appear grayish. Entire under surface of body from the bill to the extremity of the under tail-coverts white, of an extremely faint roseate hue. The bird would I consider have attained full plumage at the next moult. The weight was $5\frac{1}{4}$ ounces. It proved a male on dissection. The stomach contained the remains of two specimens of opossum shrimp (*Mysis*), a little vegetable matter, and some small pebbles.

The occurrence of this North American bird in Europe affords another opportunity for speculating whether birds can really cross the Atlantic, which some of the best ornithologists in Europe did not, at least a few years ago, believe to be possible. In my opinion, as fully stated on former occasions when noticing the occurrence of American birds in Ireland, the presumptive or circumstantial evidence is all in favour of their having really crossed the ocean*.

In the estuary, about three miles from where the *Larus Bonapartii* was shot, the first individual also of

LARUS SABINI,

known to visit the European coasts (as recorded by me in 1834), was met with; and at the opposite side of the bay a second example was afterwards obtained. Since I first noticed the species, a few individuals have been procured on the shores of continental Europe. This opportunity of noticing a very rare and closely-allied species to the preceding may be embraced, although it is not American, nor has it been obtained there but in a single instance †:—I allude to the

LARUS MINUTUS,

a beautiful adult example of which was shot in the estuary about

* See Yellow-billed American Cuckoo (*Coccyzus Americanus*) in 'Annals,' vol. ix. p. 226, and American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) in same work, vol. xvii. p. 94.

† 'Faun. Bor. Amer.' p. 426. The species is not included in the Prince of Canino's subsequently published list of North American Birds.

three miles from Belfast on the 23rd of December 1847. It came under my examination within an hour after being killed, and a full description of it was drawn up. This bird was preserved by Mr. Darragh, the Curator of the Belfast Museum, who possesses a critical knowledge of our native birds generally, and who, when visiting Strangford Lough in January last, a few weeks after having set up the specimen, saw another of these birds both on the 18th and 19th of that month at Rough Island. It was also adult, as denoted by its pure white tail. The diminutive size of the bird first attracted his attention, and he had the advantage of seeing it very near both on wing and on the ground. The dark colour of the under side of the wings was conspicuous; the tail was square at the end (not cuneate as in *L. Rossii**, nor forked as in *Lar. Sabini*). The upper surface of the wing, including the primaries, was particularly remarked to be wholly of a light colour. My informant's fear of injuring the bird as a specimen with the large shot in his gun prevented his firing at it when seen the first day; and on the second day, he had crept for a long way—after the manner that Mr. Scrope graphically describes the deer-stalker to do—and though enabled unseen by the wished-for victim to observe it attentively for some time from behind stones on the beach, and at the distance of about fifteen or twenty paces, he could not bring his gun to bear upon it without alarming it. In his attempt to do so the bird took wing, but the rough nature of the ground prevented his steadying himself so as to get even a parting shot at it. The little gull has been hitherto known in Ireland only from a single example; a beautiful bird in adult summer plumage having been shot on the river Shannon in the month of May 1840.

We cannot think of the occurrence of the three preceding species of *Xema* or Black-headed Gulls within so limited an area, without reflecting that many species of birds of which we are now ignorant, may visit the British coasts. If in the estuary at Belfast, on the eastern coast of Ireland, North American species are thus met with, how much more likely are they to visit, unnoticed by any one, the western and northern coasts of the island, as well as those of Scotland!

Of the other *Xemæ* known as British, *X. ridibundus* and *X. capistratus* (regarded by me as one species†) are common in the

* This species is noticed under the supposition that it may in winter lose the black collar, which would otherwise distinguish it. A specimen of *L. Rossii* is said to have been obtained on the Yorkshire coast last year.

† See Zool. Proceedings, 1845;—copied into the 'Annals,' vol. xvi. p. 357, and Yarrell's 'Brit. Birds,' 2nd edit.; preface, p. xi. In the three works, the last word of the foot-note is printed "hood" instead of *head*.

locality indicated for the others*; the remaining one, *X. atricilla*, has been observed on two occasions on the south coast of England, and by Montagu only. Of the two† additional European species, *X. melanocephalum* and *X. ichthyaëtum*, the former inhabits "southern," the latter "south-eastern" Europe. *Xema Franklini* is the only North American species which has not been obtained in Europe.

XXII.—On the Insects of Jamaica. By PHILIP HENRY GOSSE.

[Continued from p. 115.]

COLEOPTERA.

1. *Cicindela Guadalupensis*. I found this species in some numbers about the end of the year at Alligator Pond, on the sandy beach, close to the wharf; where the *Canavalia rosea* grows, and the beautiful *Convolvulus pes capræ* makes a carpet of verdure, and trails its long stems over the heavy sand. In May it was numerous at low-water on a little sandy (or perhaps rather muddy) point at Bluefields Creek, formed from the draining of the morass at the junction of the creek with the sea: immense numbers of little *Gelasimi* run over this point, and perforate it with their burrows in every part. Among them the *Cicindela* also run when it is not covered by the tide. They are as wary and as agile as their congeners elsewhere; on the wing with the approach of a footstep, and alighting at the distance of a few yards, so as to be caught with difficulty even with a net. I have taken them by running headlong among them, and making a dash at random with the net.

(*Carabidæ*. Two or three small species of this great family, I believe, occurred under stones at the summit of Bluefields Mountain, but I cannot now find the specimens so as to determine their genera.)

2. *Cybister lævigatus*. In some of the rivulets that cross the high road between Paradise and Savanna le mar. Its manners resemble those of the English *Dyticidæ*.

3. *Copelatus cælatipennis*.

4. *Dineutes longimanus*. At Basin Spring, in a brook having

* The species of *Iarus* (as distinguished from *Xema*) frequenting Belfast Bay are *I. marinus*, *I. fuscus*, *I. argentatus*, *I. canus*, *I. tridactylus* and *I. Islandicus*; all of which are common but the last:—it was once obtained. Specimens of these, as well as of the *Xemæ* noticed from the same locality, are preserved in the Belfast Museum.

† *X. plumiceps*, Bonap., is not enumerated in the 'Wirbelthiere Europa's' or 'Rev. Crit. des Oiseaux d'Eur.' (Schlegel).